

REMARKS

This paper is being provided in response to the Office Action dated October 29, 2008, for the above-referenced application.

The rejection of claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent App. Pub. No. 2004/0156495 to Chava, et al. (hereinafter "Chava") in view of U.S. Patent App. Pub. No. 2007/0042779 to Eikkula (hereinafter "Eikkula") is hereby traversed and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Independent claim 1 recites a multimedia message service apparatus including first decision means that, when receiving a multimedia message that has been transmitted, references an international prefix table to decide whether or not the message is to be transmitted internationally to a forwarding destination, based on transmission destination information in the multimedia message. If the first decision means decides that the message is to be transmitted to the forwarding destination, second decision means references a first routing table based on the transmission destination information to decide whether or not the forwarding destination supports number portability. If the second decision means decides that the forwarding destination does not support number portability, first acquisition means acquires the domain name of the forwarding destination from the transmission destination information by referencing said first routing table. If the second decision means decides that the forwarding destination does support number portability, second acquisition means acquires international identification information corresponding to the transmission destination information by inquiring registration means that registers subscriber data and acquires the domain name of the forwarding destination

by referencing a second routing table based on the international identification information that has thus been acquired. Forwarding means forwards the multimedia message to the forwarding destination of the domain name that has been acquired by the first acquisition means or the second acquisition means. Claims 2-4 depend from independent claim 1.

Independent claim 5 is directed to a multimedia message service apparatus that includes a first decision apparatus that, after receiving a multimedia message that has been transmitted, determines if the message is to be transmitted internationally to a forwarding destination based on transmission destination information in the multimedia message. The multimedia service apparatus also includes a second decision apparatus that, if the first decision apparatus determines that the message is to be transmitted internationally to the forwarding destination, references a first routing table based on the transmission destination information to determine if the forwarding destination supports number portability, a first acquisition apparatus that, if the second decision apparatus determines that the forwarding destination does not support number portability, acquires information identifying the forwarding destination using the transmission destination information and the first routing table, a second acquisition apparatus that, if the second decision apparatus determines that the forwarding destination does support number portability, acquires international identification information corresponding to the transmission destination information and acquires the information identifying the forwarding destination using the international identification information and a second routing table, and a forwarding apparatus that forwards the multimedia message to the forwarding destination using the information identifying the forwarding destination. Claims 6-12 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 5.

Independent claim 13 recites a method for servicing multimedia messages. The method includes receiving a multimedia message that has been transmitted, determining if the message is to be transmitted internationally to a forwarding destination based on transmission destination information in the multimedia message, if it is determined that the message is to be transmitted internationally to the forwarding destination, referencing a first routing table based on the transmission destination information to determine if the forwarding destination supports number portability, if it is determined that the forwarding destination does not support number portability, acquiring information identifying the forwarding destination using the transmission destination information and the first routing table, if it is determined that the forwarding destination does support number portability, acquiring international identification information corresponding to the transmission destination information and acquiring the information identifying the forwarding destination using the international identification information and a second routing table, and forwarding the multimedia message to the forwarding destination using the information of the forwarding destination or the international identification information. Claims 14-20 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 13.

Chava discloses a intermediary network system for facilitating message exchange between wireless networks. Message exchange between two subscribers or the same or different networks may involve lookups of subscriber data, message transformations and routing decisions. The Office Action cites principally to the flow diagram of Fig. 5 describing decisions as to whether a telephone number (TN) is an international number and whether a destination country supports number portability and resultant steps.

Eikkula discloses a telecommunications system that includes two telecommunications networks and means for providing number portability service between the networks. The method includes initiating a set-up procedure for communications between two stations, sending an enquiry to the number portability service, determining if the called station is a ported station, and informing a supplementary telecommunications service of the results of said determination before initiating a use of the supplementary telecommunications service. Paragraph [0049] of Eikkula provides that Service Routing Registers (SRR) of a network may determine whether a call is routed to a ported number or an actual subscriber of the network.

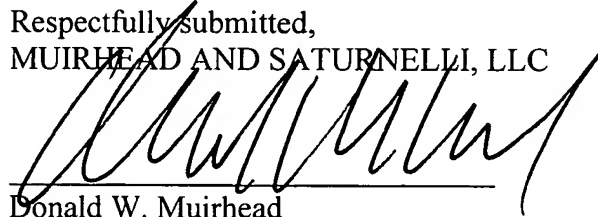
All of Applicants' independent claims recite determining if the forwarding destination supports number portability and, if number portability is not supported, then transmission destination information in the multimedia message is used along with the first routing table to obtain information identifying the forwarding destination, such as a domain name. If number portability is supported, then international identification information is obtained and used with a second routing table to obtain the information identifying the forwarding destination, such as the domain name. Applicants have found that multimedia message servicing is beneficially facilitated for international transmission of a multimedia message according to determinations of number portability and resultant information acquisition, as noted above and recited by Applicants. (See, for example, page 15, lines 12-25 of the originally-filed English specification). Note that first determining if number portability is supported, and then transmitting directly if it is not, may be exceptionally efficient in instances (countries) where number portability is not supported since it avoids the overhead of determining whether a number has been ported and, if so, to where.

As indicated at the bottom of page 5 of the Office Action, Chava fails to teach this feature of the present claimed invention. However, Eikkula does not overcome this deficiency since there is no disclosure in Eikkula regarding determining whether a destination supports portability. Instead, Eikkula provides information as to whether a particular number has been ported and, thus, effectively assumes that all destinations support number portability. In contrast, the present claimed invention first determines whether number portability is supported and thus avoids the overhead of determining if a particular number at the destination has been ported. If a destination does not support number portability, then obviously no numbers have been ported at that destination and it is a waste of resources to perform the processing illustrated in Eikkula to determine if a number at the destination has been ported. In the present claimed invention, if number portability is not supported, then the system can go directly to that country and network knowing that the target is currently registered with that country/network. In contrast, you cannot use the Eikkula database to determine if number portability is supported at a destination since all the Eikkula database indicates is whether a particular number has been ported and, if so, to where. In Eikkula, the system appears to assume that all countries allow number portability - otherwise it would allow access directly to the HLRs.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that neither Chava, not Eikkula, nor any combination thereof teach or fairly suggest at least the above-noted features as claimed by Applicants. In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Based on the above, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all outstanding rejections and objections. Favorable consideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. Should there be any questions after reviewing this paper, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at 508-898-8603.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date: February 27, 2009

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